

Cover and Green Manure Crop (acre)

Purpose

To control erosion during periods when the major crops do not furnish adequate cover; add organic material to the soil; and improve infiltration, aeration, and tilth.

Conditions where practice applies

On cropland; certain recreation and wildlife areas; and orchard, vineyard, and small fruit areas.

Definition

A crop of close-growing grasses, legumes, or small grain grown primarily for seasonal protection and soil improvement. It usually is grown for 1 year or less, except where there is permanent cover as in orchards.

Specifications guide

Seedbed preparation, date of seeding, seed mixture, fertilization, management, and time and manner of incorporating the crop into the soil.

Planning considerations for water quantity and quality

Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and ground water recharge.
2. Effects of vegetation on soil moisture.

Quality

1. Filtering effects of vegetation on movement of sediment, pathogens, and dissolved and sediment-attached substances.
2. Effects of growing and decaying vegetation on nutrients in the root zone.
3. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, pathogens, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.